

Postal Regulatory Commission
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FINAL DETERMINATION TO CLOSE
THE ENLOE, TX POST OFFICE
AND ESTABLISH
SERVICE BY RURAL ROUTE SERVICE

DOCKET NUMBER 1362636 - 75441

I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service is issuing the final determination to close the Enloe, TX Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Cooper Post Office, located four miles away.

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster retired on January 03, 2009. Since the postmaster vacancy an OIC has been installed to operate the office. Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue.

The office was studied for possible closing or consolidation due to the following reasons: Unit does not earn over 2 hours

The Enloe Post Office, an EAS-11 level, provides service from 08:30 to 16:00 Monday - Friday, 08:30 to 10:00 on Saturday and lobby hours of 24 hours on Monday - Friday and 24 hours on Saturday to 72 post office box or general delivery customers and no delivery customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, COD Mail, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail.

The retail window averaged 24 transaction(s) accounting for 24 minute(s) of retail workload daily. With minimal workload, the Postal Service feels that effective and regular service will be provided by rural route service. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: \$21,458 (56 revenue units) in FY 2008; \$14,843 (39 revenue units) in FY 2009; and \$13,001 (34 revenue units) in FY 2010. There were one permit mailer(s) or postage meter customer(s).

On February 23, 2011, representatives from the Postal Service were available at Enloe Community Center located at 87 CR 4330 to answer questions and provide information to customers. 27 customer(s) attended the meeting.

On January 27, 2011, 72 questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the Enloe Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at the Enloe Post Office. 64 questionnaires were returned. Responses regarding the proposed alternate service were as follows: 0 favorable, 44 unfavorable, and 20 expressed no opinion.

One congressional inquiry was received on April 25, 2011.

When this final determination is implemented, delivery and retail services will be provided by the Cooper Post Office, an EAS-18 level office. Window service hours at the Cooper Post Office are from 8:00 - 4:00, Monday through Friday, and closed on Saturday. There are 62 post office boxes available.

The proposal to close the Enloe Post Office was posted with an invitation for comment at the Enloe Post Office and Cooper Post Office from March 30, 2011 to May 31, 2011. The following additional concerns were received during the proposal posting period:

1. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity
Response: The customer expressed a concern about the loss of the Communities' identity. A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the suspended Post Office name and ZIP Code in addresses and in the National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory.
2. **Concern:** Customers questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance
Response: The customer questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance. Carrier service is more cost-effective than maintaining a postal facility and postmaster position. The Postal Service estimates an positive annual savings.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed from questionnaires, the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about irregular hours that the rural route serves the community
Response: The customer expressed a concern about irregular hours that the rural route serves the community. Our carriers strive to provide service at approximately the same time on a daily basis, however mail volumes and weather conditions often effect delivery times. If you desire special services from the rural carrier you may leave a note in your mailbox instructing the carrier to sound his horn, and then meet the carrier to receive services. Retail services may also be obtained at the administrative post office located _____ miles away.

2. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about leaving money in the mailbox
Response: The customer also expressed a concern about leaving money in the mailbox. A questionnaire was sent to the postal inspection service concerning mail theft and vandalism in the suspended Post Office area. Their records indicate that there has not been any report of mail theft or vandalism in the area. However, customers may place a note in their mailboxes instructing the carrier to sound their horn when they arrive, in order to transact financial business.
3. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about leaving money in the mailbox
Response: The customer also expressed a concern about leaving money in the mailbox. A questionnaire was sent to the postal inspection service concerning mail theft and vandalism in the suspendoffice area. Their records indicate that there has not been any report of mail theft or vandalism in the area. However, customers may place a note in their mailboxes instructing the carrier to sound their horn when they arrive, in order to transact financial business.
4. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about package delivery and pickup
Response: The customer expressed a concern about package delivery and pickup. Rural carriers will deliver packages that fit in your rural mail box, if the package does not fit in the mail box, the carrier will deliver the package up to 1/2 mile off of the line of travel, at a designated place, such as on your porch or under a carport.
5. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about the inability of the rural carrier to weigh and rate letters and packages
Response: The customer expressed a concern about the inability of the rural carrier to weigh and rate letters and packages. The rural carrier will accept any letters or packages for mailing. The carrier will estimate the cost and provide a receipt for any money received. On the following delivery day the carrier will provide change or a bill for the amount over the estimate.
6. **Concern:** Customers asked why their post office was being discontinued while others were retained
Response: The customer asked why the suspendoffice post office was being discontinued while others were retained. Post offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When there is a vacancy in a small office, it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means.
7. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern about collection of outgoing mail
Response: The customer expressed a concern about the collection of outgoing mail. Collection of mail will be made by the carrier when serving the route. The customer should raise the flag on the mailbox to alert the carrier that outgoing mail is to be collected from the mailbox.
8. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern about having to erect a rural mailbox
Response: The customer expressed concern about having to erect a rural mailbox. Customers are not required to erect rural mailboxes. Customers may receive PO Box service from the administrative Post Office located _____ miles away.
9. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern about having to erect a rural mailbox
Response: The customer expressed concern about having to erect a rural mailbox. Customers are not required to erect rural mailboxes. Customers may receive PO Box service from the adminoffice Post Office located admindistance miles away.
10. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to adminoffice Post Office to pick up their mail

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to the post office to pick up their mail. Customers are not required to travel to another post office to receive mail or obtain retail services. These services will be provided by the carrier to a roadside mailbox located close to customers' residences. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of a customer. Changes in the type of delivery are considered where service by existing methods would impose an extreme physical hardship for an individual customer. Any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the administrative postmaster.

11. Concern:

Customers expressed concern for those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to adminoffice Post Office to pick up their mail

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to the post office to pick up their mail. Customers are not required to travel to another post office to receive mail or obtain retail services. These services will be provided by the carrier to a roadside mailbox located close to customers' residences. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of a customer. Changes in the type of delivery are considered where service by existing methods would impose an extreme physical hardship for an individual customer. Any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the adminoffice postmaster

12. Concern:

Customers expressed concern over a postal representative not being customer oriented

Response:

The customer expressed concern over a postal representative not being customer oriented. The Postal Service is very interested in the service needs of the community and customer feedback is crucial to improving service. Concerns raised by the community will be investigated by the Postal Service and appropriate actions will be taken.

13. Concern:

Customers expressed concern over the dependability of rural route service

Response:

The customer expressed a concern over the dependability of rural route service. Rural letter carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural letter carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day.

14. Concern:

Customers felt the cost of postage was increasing while service was decreasing

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the increasing cost of postage while service was decreasing. The Postal Service is not immune to rising costs affecting every family and business. We do not receive tax dollars to cover the cost of operations and must adjust our prices to cover our costs. The Postal Service Governors are responsible for approving prices for all Postal Service products and services. For mailing services prices, such as stamp prices, the Postal Service announces the new prices each February and they become effective each May. The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) reviews the new pricing for compliance with the price cap and other provisions of the Postal Act of 2006.

15. Concern:

Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the

Response:

16. **Concern:** Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the 75
- Response:**
17. **Concern:** Customers wanted the post office to stay the same. Customers said the CPO would be a disservice to the community
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about the establishment of a Community Post Office (CPO). The CPO will be contracted to provide at least the same hours as the present post office. Depending on the location, the CPO may provide extended lobby hours. A CPO provides the same services as the suspended Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance.
18. **Concern:** Customers wanted the post office to stay the same. Customers said the CPO would be a disservice to the community
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about the establishment of a Community Post Office (CPO). The CPO will be contracted to provide at least the same hours as the present post office. Depending on the location, the CPO may provide extended lobby hours. A CPO provides the same services as the suspended Post Office, except for permit mail acceptance.
19. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about mail security
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about the security of mail. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.
20. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about obtaining accountable mail and large parcels
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about obtaining accountable mail and large parcels. If you live less than one-half mile from the line of travel, the carrier will attempt delivery of accountable items and large parcels to the customer's residence. If the live over one-half mile away or is not home when delivery is attempted, a notice will be left in the mailbox. Large parcels will be left outside the mailbox or at a designated location or a notice will be left in the mailbox. Attempted delivery items will be taken back to the administrative Post Office. Customers may pick up the item at the post office, request redelivery on another day or authorize delivery to another party.
21. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about senior citizens
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about senior citizens. Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to Customers do not have to make a special trip to the post office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the administrative postmaster for more information.
22. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about senior citizens
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about senior citizens. Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to Customers do not have to make a special trip to the post office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the administrative postmaster for more information.
23. **Concern:** You were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service

- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about having to travel to another post office for service. Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience.
24. **Concern:** At least 3 customers in the community receive heat sensitive medication. How will it be delivered.
- Response:** If you are not home a notice will be left and it will be taken back to the Post Office.
25. **Concern:** Customers are concerned about the additional cost they will have if the Post Office closes. Gas to travel the additional mileage, higher fees for Post Office boxes.
- Response:** This will be taken in consideration when a decision is made.
26. **Concern:** Customers are concerned about the increase in Post Office Box Fee in Cooper.
- Response:** The fees are higher in Cooper. If you choose rural delivery there is no charge.
27. **Concern:** Customers are concerned about the safe delivery of the medicines?
- Response:** If you choose to have your mail delivered by a rural carrier they will deliver to your mailbox.
28. **Concern:** Customers feel that the closing of the Enloe Post Office is a done deal.
- Response:** The Post Office is required to follow required steps in Post Office closings. These steps are monitored to assure that they are completed by our Headquarters office in Washington DC.
29. **Concern:** Customers inquired about mailbox installation and maintenance.
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about mailbox installation and maintenance. Customers are responsible for mailbox installation and maintenance. Mailboxes must be placed so that they may be safely and conveniently served by the carrier and must be located on the right-hand side of the road in the direction of the carrier's travel. Mailbox supports should conform to state laws and highway regulations. The Postal Service recommends that customers contact the administrative postmaster or carrier for advice on placement of mailboxes and mailbox height and supports.
30. **Concern:** Customers suggest that we leave the small Post Offices open and reduce their hours. Have one employee work 2 hours in one then travel to another. Working up to 3 different Post Offices a day.
- Response:** This type of suggestion should be addressed on the questionnaire that was mailed to you. This would not generate enough savings.
31. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about a change of address.
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about a change in address. Customers will be assigned a 911 address. The new address will continue to use the community name and ZIP Code. Mail will be forwarded in accordance with postal regulations, and change of address forms are available from the Postal Service to assist customers in notifying correspondents of the change.
32. **Concern:** Does the Paris Post Office have enough Post Office Boxes to accommodate some of the Enloe customers if they choose to rent a box there instead of Cooper?
- Response:** Yes.
33. **Concern:** Have you already closed the Ben Franklin Post Office?

- Response:** No, it is being studied.
34. **Concern:** The Cooper Post Office is not handicap accessible.
- Response:** This concern will be addressed by the Postmaster. He will find out what needs to be done to correct this issue.
35. **Concern:** Why does the Post Office promote it's internet address?
- Response:** To be competitive with the times.
36. **Concern:** You expressed a concern that they requested and were denied rural delivery service
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern that you requested and were denied rural delivery service. There are several guidelines which must be met prior to a road being approved for delivery. The road to be traveled must be at least 14 feet wide and maintained at all times of the year. It cannot dead end in a private driveway even if the drive is maintained by a municipality. There must be a suitable turning point provided for the carrier, preferably with no backing. If backing is involved, there are other guidelines to adhere to. If backing is necessitated, the Postmaster must verify it is in a low-traffic area and there are no children in the immediate vicinity on a regular basis. There must also be a minimum of one family per one-half mile of travel.

Some advantages of the proposal are:

1. The rural and contract carriers may provide retail services, alleviating the need to go to the post office. Stamps by Mail order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. CBUs can offer the security of individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will not have to pay post office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the post office to pick up mail.

Some disadvantages of the proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community. Retail services may be provided by the rural or contract delivery carrier.
2. Meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier at the box to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in the mailing address. The community name will continue to be used in the new address. A carrier route address will be assigned.
4. A change in your PO Box Fees may be a result of this proposal.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this final determination will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

Enloe is an unincorporated community located in Delta County. The community is administered politically by Delta County Commissioners & Judge. Police protection is provided by the Delta County Sheriff. Fire protection is provided by the Enloe Volunteer Fire Department. The community is comprised of 33% Retires, 59% Commuters, 3% Self employed, 2% Farmers, 3% Ranchers Source - Officer In Charge - Laurritta Green and those who commute to work at nearby communities and may work in local businesses.

Businesses and organizations include. TK Honey Springfield Spraying Young's Garage Techsys-Chassis Chassis Dynamic WRB INC Crossroad Property RY Construction. Residents may travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Nonpostal services provided at the Enloe Post Office will be available at the Cooper Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the Cooper Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed from questionnaires, the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the loss of the Communities' identity. A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the suspended Post Office name and ZIP Code in addresses and in the National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory.

Based on the information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this final determination will not adversely affect the community.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster retired on January 03, 2009. The noncareer postmaster relief (PMR) may be separated from the Postal Service. No other Postal Service employee will be adversely affected. Since the postmaster vacancy an OIC has been installed to operate the office.

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$ 40,841 with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-11, No COLA)	\$ 30,492
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$ 10,215
Annual Lease Costs	<u>+ \$ 8,224</u>
Total Annual Costs	\$ 48,931
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	<u>- \$ 8,090</u>
Total Annual Savings	<u>\$ 40,841</u>

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

VI. SUMMARY

This is the final determination to close the Enloe, TX Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Cooper Post Office, located four miles away.

The postmaster retired on January 03, 2009. If the office has a noncareer PMR(s), they may be separated from the Postal Service; however, attempts will be made to reassign the employee(s) to a nearby facility. No other employee(s) will be adversely affected. The workload has declined. Effective and regular service will continue to be provided by rural route service.

The Enloe Post Office provided delivery and retail service to 72 PO Box or general delivery customers and no delivery route customers. The daily retail window transactions averaged 24. There are one permit mailers or postage meter customers.

There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services may be available from a rural or contract delivery carrier, which could alleviate the need to travel to a Post Office for service. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$40,841 annually. A disadvantage to some will be in meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions with rural or contract delivery carrier.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this final determination is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A. Support Materials. Copies of all materials upon which this final determination is based are available for public inspection at the Enloe Post Office and Cooper Post Office during normal office hours.
- B. Appeal Rights. This final determination to close the Enloe Post Office may be appealed by any person served by that office to the Postal Regulatory Commission at 901 New York Ave NW, Suite 200, Washington DC 20268-0001. Appeals must be received by the Commission within 30 days of the date this final determination is posted. If an appeal is filed, copies of appeal documents prepared by the Postal Regulatory Commission or the parties to the appeal will be made available for public inspection at Enloe Post Office and Cooper Post Office during normal office hours.



Dean J. Granholm
Vice President of Delivery and Post Office Operations

07/25/2011

Date